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Senate committee approves Sen. Cassis' "Good Builders" legislation

LANSING—The Senate Economic Development, Small Business and Regulatory Reform Committee today voted unanimously to recommend bills sponsored by Sen. Nancy Cassis that will protect and advance the professionalism, ethics, and integrity of the residential building industry while giving consumers greater confidence and security in those they hire. Senate Bills 631 and 632, known as the "Good Builders" legislation, will provide several mechanisms to strengthen the industry.

"We are now one step closer to ensuring the proper licensing and education of builders and also enforcing penalties for builders who don't reach industry standards," said Cassis, R-
Novi. "This will be a safeguard for those wanting to build or remodel a home, making it much easier to find licensed, knowledgeable builders."

The bills give the state the authority to go after unlicensed builders. The legislation also creates the Builder Enforcement Fund in the Michigan Department of Treasury. Each licensee will pay a \$30 one-time fee to this fund for the purpose of prosecuting unlicensed builder activity. After startup of the fund, civil fines collected from prosecuting unlicensed builders will continue to fund this program.

Builders convicted of a misdemeanor enacted by the legislation could face up to a year in jail and \$25,000 in fines. The bills also provide for civil fines up to \$25,000. In addition, the legislation:

- Requires that all licensees have continuing education for the first 6 years after initial licensure. Should a violation occur the department could require up to 18 hours of continuing education from the builder;
- Creates a residential builders' and maintenance and alteration contractors' board;
- Requires the Department of Treasury to post on its website any complaints against licensees (final orders) within 30 days after the determination by the board; and
- Requires the department to post annually on its website the number of final orders.

(More)

“The purchase of a home is the biggest investment people ever make,” said Cassis. “This legislation is vital for young people and their families buying their first home, or for senior citizens purchasing a new home on a fixed budget. We want them to have the assurance that they won’t be undermined by bad apples who aren’t licensed for residential building or those builders who do shoddy, substandard workmanship.”

The bills now move to the full Senate for consideration.

A photo of Sen. Cassis testifying on the Good Builders legislation before the Economic Development, Small Business and Regulatory Reform Committee is available at:

www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/

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